

Report to PAIU Curriculum Directors

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- **Race to the Top Update-** Alternative Teacher certification and teacher evaluation were both areas that hurt the final application. PDE met with the Gates foundation on Sept. 8th to discuss continued funding to support the development of a state-wide system for supporting a teacher /administrator evaluation system (see agenda item below). Overall, it was an “instructive” process. The grant application will serve to map out the priorities and timeline for the Departments actions/priorities in the future.
- **Update on State Budget-**The Governors budget increase cut from 250 to 200 million dollars. Despite the DOE’s attempts to distribute the money quickly, it appears that Pennsylvania will be held by the legislature and disbursed (after the election) in the FY 2011-12. Legislators may use it to backfill for the ARRA funds due to end next year or to cover the 200 million of increases for education in this year’s budget. Application was made this week. *The next group of administrators will determine how the money will be sent. Sect. Duncan wants the money to be distributed as soon as possible.*
- **School Improvement Grants-** Awards for a second round of School Improvement grants will be in December. There is roughly 50 million dollars left to be dispersed. *Nutrition and Activity mandates will be a priority, however, it is not clear how students will receive the physical activity requirements. Guidance should be coming out soon.*
- **Physical Education Regulations in Chapter 12** –Chapter 12 will go to legislators the week of Sept. 13. The physical education stipulations will likely be dropped although the nutrition and activity subsections will remain. Guidance should be disseminated after September 21st.
- **PSSA Test Results** – To be released the week of the 13th. Some question concerning letters that go out to parents with achievement data and recommendations for AP courses. This may be problematic for districts that may not have AP offerings. *Parents with children in schools that do not offer AP courses are not happy. Kristen has additional information about this issue.*
- **Role of PATTAN Centers-** This has been brought to the attention of the PaTTAN directors and John Tommasini. John will convene a meeting which will include representation from PAIU. Please forward any discussion items to Cori, Cindy or Brian by September 30th.

- Overview of Component 2 funding and upcoming audit** – The DOE will be monitoring the Bureau of Special Education concerning the use of IDEA funds. Pat Hozella wants to remind IU staff that those people paid from Component II (TaC) funds must have their job responsibilities aligned with PDE and IU special education plan initiatives. *OSEP's audit of Pennsylvania will look at the responsibilities and funding of TaC staff. The questions around who and what TaC staff provides regarding state initiatives is being looked at closely. Many of the professional development offerings are applicable to all educators, both special and regular educators. All IUs handle the funding and the organization of the staff differently.*
- Common Core Standards Implementation** – There will be a detailed Q and A out in October that will highlight the Common Core standards and the Keystone assessments. Work groups have been formed to begin alignment activities and that information will be rolled out at the December SAS Institute. As the groups begin to look at the alignment of Common Core to PA standards they are also trying to align college entrance criteria. An example: must move PA standards away from narrative to more research-based writing and the reading of more non-fiction literature. *Pa. Science Standards will be published in December of 2010. *A cross walk is being done by Jim Bohan for math, ELA (led by Jean Dyzsel) is in better shape than math at this point.*
- Graduation Cohort Update** – Jennifer Waltz shared the PowerPoint attached. The Cohort Rate calculation is based on the number of entering 9th graders, includes numbers and adjustments for transfers in and out of that cohort, and compares that cohort to the actual number of on-time graduates. The calculation reflects a change from the current “4-Year Leaver Rate,” in which transfers in and out of the graduation class and the number of students who do not graduate on time do not affect the graduation rate. DOE is rigid in their interpretation of the cohort which will reflect negatively on schools/districts with high numbers of IEP students meeting IEP goals verses credits. Those students typically walk with their graduating class but take longer to graduate or age-out. Final PIMS data is due from districts on September 30th. Graduation data will then be published on PDE’s website in December. The most recent PIMS data collected shows a statewide graduation rate of only 39.78%. IU executive directors were urged to contact their district superintendents to remind them of the submission deadline. *In 4 yrs. IEP students who graduate on IEP goals will go away in 4 years. This along with the new calculation has some superintendents concerned that the rates will go down. On the district report card next year in order to phase in this new process, they will show the rate calculated by the current method as well as the new method. The current graduation rate is at 39%. This is a federal mandate.*
- Keystones and Diagnostic Assessment update** - Live trainings have been underway the week of September 6th. These trainings have been cataloged and are available to view on the PDE website under the “Fair Assessments” tab. The Classroom Diagnostic Tools (CDT) will be rolled out on time. Question about who may and who must participate in Keystone Exams- Student graduating in 2015-16 must take them (current 7-8th graders) if the district uses Keystones. There will be no cut scores until next year and so exams

should not be used as 1/3 of the course grade. Urge student in English to participate to help gather data for cut scores. A Q and A will be published this October. A professional development module is being developed with the assistance of IU#10. This coming summer there will be a comprehensive rollout of guidance concerning the exams and outlining future direction. (This timeline makes sense due to the multi-state consortia Pa. will be participating in.) *They are encouraging participation to establish cut scores.*

- **Momentum Grant (Teacher Evaluation--Gates Grant)** – Sharon Brumbaugh presented on the information attached. Essentially Pa will be moving from “highly qualified to highly performing”. The grant will allow the Department to develop criteria for a state-wide system for assessing the performance of teachers and principals. There are two work groups, one for each class of employee. They are looking at other states systems Mathematica will be assisting in the development of the measures (they are currently working in Pittsburgh). The measures will align with Danielson’s framework for teachers and PIL standards for administrators. How to link these models with student growth data will be challenging. Danielson’s work has never been “quantified” by research. Historically, PVAAS data has not been used to assess teacher performance but some aspects of value added will be used in the calculation of student performance. *Things are moving quickly. There are 2 subgroups one for principals and the other for teachers. Right now the data exists on buildings that can be used. There are 3 executive directors participating.*
- **Assessment Consortia in Reading and Math-** currently there are 3 consortia of states. Pennsylvania is participating in two of them: The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (26 states) and SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium, (31 states). The primary focus of the 2 is the development of common assessments based on the Common Core Standards. The target date for roll out, will be 2014. They are to be computer-based and include performance-based assessments as well. Keystones will continue in development and the timeline for piloting will be unchanged due to the need for a pool of data to create cut scores. PDE will use the assessment items in an effort to save some money when they are published. Development will also continue for Science and Social Studies assessments. *We are starting 2010-13 and the target 2013-2014. The advantage for PA to participate will provide more valid items and could produce a cost savings for PA.*

Other Reports:

- **Rural/ Small IUs Committee:** A new committee chaired by Mary Colf has been created by the executive directors. The IUs included in the consortium are: 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 19, 27, 28, & 29. You may periodically be contacted to provide information as PAIU seeks to build capacity for these IU’s across the Commonwealth. *This started because of the lack of capacity at smaller IUs. The Business Managers at all IUs rec’d a*

survey from Bill asking for specific information related to the work they are asked to do. Be aware that we may be asked for information for this survey.

- **PDE Podcasts:** The Department will issue monthly podcasts over PAIUNet that will be viewed by superintendents at monthly SAC meetings. This initiative seeks solicit feedback directly from school districts on policy items that may directly affect their operations. Comments will be then sent from the IU executive directors to designated PDE contacts, involved with the policy. *Each month a new podcast will be shared with Superintendents. The feedback from the group will be sent to the department.*
- **Online Learning and PAIUNet:** Some IU technology staff and other members of the PAIU Online Learning Committee are examining developing a consortia of IU's across the commonwealth sharing collective Online Learning courses. **The committee is compiling a common course listing of all Online Learning courses soon to be available across PAIUNet.** We are hopeful that PAIUNet will be the vehicle of choice for any educational organization seeking Online Learning opportunities across Pennsylvania (or other states) – this is especially true given the comprehensive number of course offered by IUs. You may have been asked or have already contributed this information to Dr. O'Brien's group. This concept is still in the development stages with many issues yet to be discussed. The next meeting of this group is scheduled for September 16th, in coordination with the PAIMS group's meeting. *This chaired by Joe O'Brien is meeting in State College today. The group is considering compilation of all course offerings developed by IUs. Before we can partner with technology groups and higher ed who want to provide information to high school students, we need to develop a framework to partner and cohesively advertise the opportunities. This is a great way to get content onto PAIU net for school districts. The quality of what we share is better than many of the vendors, which school districts also hear from.*